

Who We Are and What We Do

Our Mission

Our mission is to promote evidence-based practices that improve the health and well-being of South Carolina's infants, children, pregnant and postpartum women.

Our Goals and Strategies

- Create and sustain systems for coordinated responses to health concerns.
- Prevent death and disability of children through newborn screenings, home visitation, referrals, and evidenced-based interventions.
- Bring attention to perinatal and children's health issues through public awareness and strategic partnerships.

Create and Sustain Systems of Care

Programs within the Division of Children's Health and Perinatal Services work with public and private agencies to improve health outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women, and for infants and children in ways that require strong statewide collaboration.

Perinatal Regionalization

The regional perinatal systems of care ensure 24/7 access to physician consultation, referral, and family support for high-risk pregnant women and newborn infants. The goal is for high-risk births to occur at the level of hospital most appropriate for the mother and infant's anticipated medical needs.

School Health Services

DHEC and the SC Department of Education jointly employ a School Nurse Consultant, who works with school nurses statewide to create school screening recommendations, update guidelines for school nursing services, and disseminate data on school health services. Annual educational conferences and frequent meetings with statewide school nurse leaders help both agencies facilitate implementation of evidence-based practices into delivery of school health services.

Prevent Death and Disability

The Division of Children's Health and Perinatal Services houses several programs that work with hospitals, healthcare providers, and other service providers to screen for, detect, and address threats to health in infancy and early childhood.

South Carolina Newborn Screening Program

This program screens for 53 disorders and notifies the primary healthcare provider of infants who screen positive for any of the conditions on the test panel. The program provides follow-up services while a diagnosis is confirmed or ruled out, and provides metabolic formula free of charge to SC residents diagnosed with inborn errors of metabolism.

First Sound Program

Nearly all of the over 55,000 infants born in South Carolina each year receive a hearing screening at birth. About 1,800 to 2,000 children each year (3 to 3.5%) require a referral for additional testing. Coordination of services for these children is done by the First Sound Program, working with audiologists and medical specialists.

Postpartum Newborn Home Visits

DHEC receives referrals from hospitals across SC to visit high-risk mothers and their infants. During those visits, nurses assess the health of the mother and infant, providing education on health, nutrition,



Division of Children's Health and Perinatal Services Programs (by stage of life)

Pregnant and Postpartum Women	Infants	Children & Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perinatal Regionalization Postpartum Newborn Home Visits Care Line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newborn Blood Spot Screening Newborn Hearing Screening Postpartum Newborn Home Visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood Lead Screening School Health Services Abstinence Education

safety, and development, and connecting families with community resources. DHEC nurses also visit families with very sick or premature newborns to help them get ready to care for these children at home.

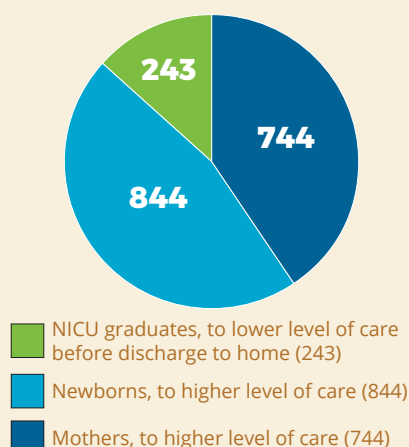
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

In South Carolina, over 40,000 children each year are screened for elevated blood lead levels. The Division works closely with health care providers and DHEC's nursing and environmental health staff to detect sources of lead in children's environments and to make sure follow-up testing is done.

Did You Know?

DHEC works with obstetric providers and hospitals to help assure that mothers with high-risk pregnancies and their newborns receive the most appropriate level of care before, during, and after delivery.

Types of Perinatal Transports in 2017



Awareness and Partnerships

Division staff support community-focused activities that identify, prevent, and address health concerns.

Abstinence Education

South Carolina's abstinence education efforts support children and adolescents by promoting abstinence to prevent teen pregnancy and STDs. The program serves youth who are homeless and/or in foster care, who live in geographic areas with high teen birth rates, or who represent groups with disparities in teen birth rates.

Care Line

The Care Line number **1-855-4-SCDHEC (1-855-472-3432)** is a statewide information and referral hotline to help families make appointments for immunizations and WIC, to access services for children with special healthcare needs, family planning clinics, breast and cervical cancer screenings, and other health programs. Care Line staff can help arrange transportation to medical appointments, and direct callers to resources following natural disasters.

Focus Area for 2018

Safer Sleep / Prevent SUIDs

Sudden unexplained infant death (SUID) is a category of often-preventable causes of infant death. Many SUID cases, including accidental suffocation, may be prevented with family and community education on safer sleep, especially in the first year of life.

Other Division Priorities

- Champion children's health issues through the Child Well-Being Coalition
- Increase community awareness of evidence-based interventions to improve the health of pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children
- Increase family and community involvement with children's health issues
- Continue or initiate quality improvement processes for programs and services
- Improve content and readability of websites

For More Information, Contact:

Lucy Gibson, MSW, LMSW, Director, Division of Children's Health and Perinatal Services
Mills Jarrett Complex, 2100 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201
803-898-0767 • gibsonlh@dhec.sc.gov • info@dhec.sc.gov